Index of Essays by Eloy Escagedo Gutierrez: Cuban-American Family History & Miami Memoir

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Date Range: 2023–2025
Topics: Cuban-American history, Sweetwater, Miami, personal memoir, exile, Everglades
Source: https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com

This index collects essays written by Eloy Escagedo Gutierrez that explore Cuban-American family history, childhood memories, and the cultural landscape of Sweetwater and Miami, Florida. Originally published on Substack, these reflections preserve personal and ancestral narratives, offering a window into identity, place, and time.

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San Carlos Institute, Key West

Published: September 17, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/san-carlos-institute-key-west)
Summary: A reflection on the San Carlos Institute's role in Cuban exile history, culminating in a 1986 op-ed by Eloy J. Escagedo Lliraldi advocating for its restoration.

Black Flag at Grand Central in Miami, 2013

Published: September 8, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/black-flag-at-grand-central-in-miami)
Summary: A personal recollection of working a marketing gig at Grand Central in Miami during Black Flag's 2013 reunion tour. The post captures the venue's industrial atmosphere, the chaotic acoustics, and the fleeting memory of a space that was later demolished.

Memories of the Miami Serpentarium

Published: September 6, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/memories-of-the-miami-serpentarium)
Summary: A childhood memory of visiting the Miami Serpentarium in the late 1970s, where a giant snake statue and a live snake encounter sparked instinctive fear. The post reflects on the surreal atmosphere and the site's legacy as a once-popular reptile attraction in South Florida.

1990s, Miami Beach, One After 909

Published: September 2, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1990s-miami-beach-one-after-909)
Summary: A nostalgic memory of hearing the Beatles' "One After 909" for the first time on South Beach in the early '90s. The moment, set against Miami's sunlit art deco backdrop, became a lasting anchor between music and memory.

Under Florida Skies

Published: August 29, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/under-florida-skies)

Summary: A poetic reflection on the family home in Sweetwater, Florida, as a timeless anchor of identity, memory, and exile. The post honors ancestral legacy and the emotional permanence of place across generations.

Tamiami Airport across from Sweetwater, Florida

Published: August 23, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1963-tamiami-airport-across-from)
Summary: A historical snapshot of Tamiami Airport and Sweetwater in 1963, just years before the area became home to FIU and the author's family. The post reflects on early infrastructure, including the original wooden bridge on 109th Avenue, and the transformation of the neighborhood over time.

Memories of Loop Road, in the Everglades

Published: August 22, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/memories-of-loop-road-in-the-everglades)
Summary: A vivid journey through Loop Road, a rugged and remote stretch of Old Florida carved from the original Tamiami Trail in 1921. The post blends natural beauty, Everglades lore, and a personal tale of breakdown and survival deep in the wilderness.

The Night We Drove Old Dixie Down

Published: August 21, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-night-we-drove-old-dixie-down)
Summary: A lively recollection of Everglades airboat days, late-night adventures with friend Les Blanchard, and a honky-tonk journey through Old Florida. The post blends nostalgia, camaraderie, and tribute to a friend whose memory still lingers.

Corner of 400 and SW 109th Ave, Sweetwater, Fl, Then and Now

Published: August 20, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/corner-of-400-and-sw-109th-ave-sweetwater)
Summary: A reflection on a once-abandoned corner of 109th Avenue in Sweetwater, remembered for its cinematic emptiness and quiet presence. The post contrasts childhood memories with the area's transformation into student housing and urban decay.

Sweetwater, then and now, 2011 vs 2024

Published: August 19, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/sweetwater-then-and-now-2011-vs-2024) **Summary**: A reflection on Sweetwater’s transformation from a quiet, pine-lined neighborhood with wooden bridges and small homes to a modern landscape of student high-rises. The post contrasts childhood memories of community and play with the evolving urban footprint along 109th Avenue and the Tamiami Trail.

The old Sweetwater garage

Published: August 18, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-old-sweetwater-garage)
Summary: A nighttime visit to the old Sweetwater garage on 109th Avenue evokes memories of childhood, family, and local legends like Uncle Miltie. The post blends personal nostalgia with historical texture, capturing the spirit of a place that quietly endures.

From Maliaño to Cuba: The Journey of the Escagedo Line

Published: August 15, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/from-maliano-to-cuba-the-journey)
Summary: A genealogical account tracing the Escagedo family's roots in Cantabria, Spain, and their gradual migration to Cuba across generations. The post highlights Diego Millán Escagedo Mier’s legacy, his descendants’ varied paths, and the 1930 voyage of the author’s grandfather to Havana.

End of the 60s, Miami, Florida

Published: August 14, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/end-of-the-60s-miami-florida)
Summary: A powerful family story tracing the journey of Berta Maria Gutierrez Jimenez from post-revolution Cuba to Miami in 1967. The post recounts her family's defiant exit, moments of tension and courage, and the beginning of a new life in Little Havana and Sweetwater.

Balbina Escagedo Valle and Jacinta Rivas Salmon

Published: August 14, 2025

Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/balbina-escagedo-valle-and-jacinta)
Summary: A personal memory of speaking with great-aunt Balbina Escagedo Valle, whose life in Cantabria unfolded alongside family history and quiet acts of connection. The post traces her lineage, her role in preserving tradition, and her lasting presence through stories and gifts.

A Nickel for the bottle, or you can grab a 5 Cent gum from the jar

Published: August 13, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/a-nickle-for-the-bottle-or-you-can)
Summary: A nostalgic look at a 1980s Sweetwater candy store, where childhood routines, sugary treasures, and neighborhood warmth came together. The post captures the sensory joy of simpler days and the lasting imprint of home-base memories.

Rusty Pelican Bay

Published: August 12, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/rusty-pelican-bay)
Summary: A lyrical meditation on memory, place, and lineage centered around the Rusty Pelican and Biscayne Bay. The post blends poetic reflection with personal history, evoking a sense of timeless connection and quiet longing.

Miami’s Forgotten 1990 Comic Con

Published: August 11, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/miamis-forgotten-1990-comic-con)
Summary: A reconstructed memory of a 1990 Miami comic book convention where Todd McFarlane signed Spider-Man #1, held at a modest hotel before the era of mega-cons. The post captures the excitement of early fandom, the role of Sunshine Comics, and the enduring value of a moment lost to time but preserved in memory.

Circa 1975, Sweetwater, Dade County, Florida

Published: August 10, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/circa-1975-sweetwater-dade-county)
Summary: A tender recollection of childhood in Sweetwater, Florida, where quiet

evenings echoed with Everglades sounds and the warmth of home. The post evokes a slower, gentler time marked by linoleum floors, jalousie windows, and the rhythms of nature.

Late in the evening, I stood on 109th Avenue, Sweetwater, Florida

Published: August 8, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/late-in-the-evening-i-stood-on-109th)
Summary: A quiet evening on 109th Avenue sparks reflections on a Sweetwater auto shop rich with personal and local history, from childhood memories to the eccentric charm of Uncle Miltie. The post blends nostalgia, neighborhood lore, and the haunting stillness of memory under streetlight.

"Tryin' To Find My Way Back Home"

Published: August 7, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/tryin-to-find-my-way-back-home)
Summary: A heartfelt song written in Sweetwater in 2008, capturing snapshots of Miami youth, music shops, and Beatle-fueled afternoons. The lyrics trace a journey through memory, longing, and the quiet search for home amid the drift of time.

1982 and 2024, Sweetwater, Florida, police parking lot

Published: August 7, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1982-and-2024-sweetwater-florida)
Summary: A reflection on Sweetwater’s police parking lot in 1982 and 2024, recalling childhood walks, local politics, and the enduring presence of the old garage across 109th Avenue. The post captures a moment in civic history and the quiet continuity of place.

1982, 3D Gorilla T.V. broadcast. Anyone remember?

Published: August 6, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1982-3d-gorilla-tv-broadcast-anyone)
Summary: A childhood memory of watching the 1982 televised 3D broadcast of *Gorilla at Large*, expecting King Kong but getting a theme park gorilla instead. The post captures the excitement, disappointment, and quirky nostalgia of a nationwide TV event and a night in Little Havana.

"La Vaquita" Farm Store, Miami, Florida, Memories

Published: August 5, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/la-vaquita-farm-store-miami-florida)
Summary: A nostalgic memory of late-night drives to “La Vaquita,” Sweetwater’s beloved Farm Store, paired with reflections on neighborhood change and looming displacement at Li’l Abner Mobile Home Park. The post weaves personal history with broader shifts in Miami’s urban landscape.

La Francia store in Aguada de Pasajeros, Las Villas, Cuba

Published: August 4, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/la-francia-store-in-aguada-de-pasajeros)
Summary: A family history centered on La Francia, a beloved Cuban shop owned by Eloy Escagedo Valle and Nena Lliraldi, known for its toy sales and community generosity. The post recounts its rise in the 1950s and its forced seizure by communist militia in 1963, preserving a legacy through memory and written testimony.

Lion Country Safari in the late 70s

Published: August 4, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/lion-country-safari-in-the-late-70s)
Summary: A cherished family memory from the late ’70s at Lion Country Safari in Loxahatchee, captured in a photo later animated with AI. The post reflects on the subtle beauty of preserving moments through technology, even with its imperfections.

The Grand Prix of Miami, Tamiami Park, 1988

Published: August 3, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-grand-prix-of-miami-tamiami-park)
Summary: A memory of sneaking into the Grand Prix of Miami at Tamiami Park in 1988, just steps from home in Sweetwater. The post blends youthful adventure with reflections on the park’s layered history—from RC cars to race tracks and the enduring site of the Dade County Youth Fair.

Sweetwater, Florida, Strawberry Festival sometime in the 40s

Published: August 2, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/sweetwater-florida-strawberry-festival)
Summary: A vintage photo from the Strawberry Festival in Sweetwater, Florida, likely from the late 1940s or early ’50s, sparks reflections on the town’s evolving landscape. The post traces landmarks along 109th Avenue, recalling circus performers, Jimmy’s Lounge, and the enduring charm of the old Sweetwater Bridge.

1970s, Livingroom, Sweetwater, Dade County, Florida

Published: August 1, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1970s-livingroom-sweetwater-dade)
Summary: A warm recollection of the family living room in 1970s Sweetwater, Florida, where evenings were quiet, pine trees shaded the canal, and the hum of the AC accompanied favorite TV shows. The post preserves the scene through stitched film footage, capturing the comfort of home and time gone by.

El Teatro Martí, Miami, Florida

Published: July 31, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/el-teatro-marti-miami-florida)
Summary: A vivid recollection of weekend visits to El Teatro Martí in the early ’80s, framed by family rituals in Little Havana. The post traces the theater’s layered history—from KKK headquarters to boxing arena to Cuban exile cinema—while capturing the warmth of father-son outings and the charm of a bygone Miami.

1970s, Midway Mall on Flagler St., egg shaped seats

Published: July 30, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1970s-midway-mall-on-flagler-st-egg)
Summary: A nostalgic snapshot of Midway Mall in the 1970s, recalling its signature egg-shaped seats along the thoroughfare. The post reflects on memory, change, and the quiet feeling of being the last one who remembers—a sentiment echoed in a line from Simon & Garfunkel.

Entrance to Rickenbacker Causeway, circa 1969-1970

Published: July 30, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/entrance-to-rickenbacker-causeway)
Summary: A panoramic image of the Rickenbacker Causeway entrance in Miami, circa 1969–1970, created from family film footage shot by Eloy Escagedo Lliraldi. The post preserves a historic view through stitched frames and a later video project, honoring both place and legacy.

Memories of Vann Academy, Sweetwater, Florida

Published: July 29, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/memories-of-vann-academy-sweetwater)
Summary: A vivid recollection of childhood at Vann Academy in Sweetwater, Florida, during the early ’80s. The post blends personal anecdotes—from grapefruit trees and burnt match crafts to a memorable Flag mishap—with reflections on community activism, school life, and the quiet charm of growing up in a changing neighborhood.

Memories of Sweetwater's General Store on 109th Ave

Published: July 29, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/memories-of-sweetwaters-general-store)
Summary: A detailed remembrance of Sweetwater’s General Store at 532 SW 109th Ave, once a neighborhood hub for groceries, lunch, and childhood treats. The post blends memories with historical context, including a 1970 newspaper clipping and reflections on the store’s layout, atmosphere, and eventual transition to city ownership.

Midway Mall 1983 and 2022

Published: July 29, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/midway-mall-1983-and-2022)
Summary: A visual comparison of Midway Mall’s southern end in 1983 and 2022, located at 7795 W Flagler St, Miami. The post reflects on the mall’s transformation over time, using archival and contemporary images to highlight the contrast between yesterday and today.

BrandsmartUSA in 1990

Published: July 29, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/brandsmartusa-in-1990)
Summary: A brief reflection on family visits to BrandsMart USA in the 1990s, recalling its original locations near the Palmetto Expressway and U.S. 1. The post highlights its role in family routines and notes the brand's expansion across South Florida, including Miami-Dade and Loxahatchee.

1983, Midway Mall, Egg Shaped Seating

Published: July 28, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1983-midway-mall-egg-shaped-seating)
Summary: A long-awaited rediscovery of the iconic egg-shaped seats at Midway Mall in 1983, captured in archival footage. The post reflects on their quirky, space-age charm and the way childhood memories preserve even the smallest details of place and time.

1983, vacant interior of Woolco, at Midway Mall

Published: July 27, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1983-vacant-interior-of-woolco-at)
Summary: A stitched image of Woolco's vacant interior at Midway Mall in July 1983 sparks reflections on the mall's evolution—from Woolco's 1970 opening to its replacement by Winston's Discount Fashions, and later transformations into Home Depot and Costco. The post blends personal memories of mall life, arcade weekends, and retail shifts across decades.

Castle Park, next to Midway Mall, in the 80s

Published: July 26, 2025
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/castle-park-next-to-midway-mall-in)
Summary: A nostalgic tribute to Malibu Castle Park in 1980s Miami, where medieval charm met arcade thrills, mini-golf, and go-karts. The post recalls childhood visits with family and friends, vivid memories of a transparent Tron figure, and the joy of a place that defined an era. This isn't just content—it's memory.

1991, Miami International Mall

Published: July 25, 2025

Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1991-miami-international-mall)
Summary: A stitched Panavision image of Miami International Mall in 1991 sets the stage for childhood memories of roaming the mall while Mom worked at Jordan Marsh. The post recalls arcade adventures at Fun-n-Games, comic book browsing, and the rhythm of check-ins and explorations that defined a Sweetwater kid's day off.

Learning to swim, Miami, Florida

Published: February 24, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/learning-to-swim-miami-florida)
Summary: A tender memory of learning to swim in early '80s Miami, guided by grandfather Eloy Escagedo Valle at Tamiami Pool and Tropical Park Lake. The post captures the warmth of family, the quiet bravery of childhood, and the joy of mastering something new under the watchful care of loved ones.

Sweetwater hieroglyphics from the 80s

Published: January 15, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/sweetwater-hieroglyphics-from-the)
Summary: A tribute to Sweetwater's 1980s youth culture, etched into sidewalk concrete with names and band references like "Ozzy 86" and "Motley Crue." The post captures weekend scenes of denim-clad teens, MTV-inspired style, and the soundtrack of a generation—an enduring story told in rock and cement.

1978, Little Havana, Miami, Florida

Published: January 13, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1978-little-havana-miami-florida)
Summary: A layered memory of weekends in 1970s Little Havana, centered around a family photo in front of Victoria Hospital. The post traces the journey of grandparents arriving on the Freedom Flights in 1968, the rhythms of shopping trips, and the warmth of a three-unit apartment that anchored early family life before settling in Sweetwater.

Benamocarra, Axarquía, Gutiérrez Ruiz

Published: January 8, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/benamocarra-axarquia-gutierrez-

ruiz)
Summary: A genealogical reflection tracing the Gutiérrez Ruiz family's roots from Benamocarra, Málaga, to Cuba in the early 20th century. The post explores ancestral migrations, family connections in Little Havana, and the legacy of great-grandparents José Gutiérrez Jurado and María Concepción Ruiz Rus, whose descendants helped shape a Cuban-American story.

They married in 1878, and I found them

Published: January 7, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/they-married-in-1878-and-i-found)
Summary: A deeply personal account of tracing family roots to San Martín De Quevedo, Cantabria, where Santiago Valle and Maria Ventura Fernandez Bustamante married in 1878. The post details the challenges of genealogical research, the thrill of discovery, and the rich ancestral legacy that stretches from Spain to Cuba to Florida.

The Cowboy Palace

Published: January 6, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-cowboy-palace)
Summary: A lively memory of performing at The Cowboy Palace in Los Angeles in 2000, where a spontaneous Blues set won over a crowd of line-dancing country fans. The post captures the thrill of the moment, the charm of the venue, and the unexpected harmony between musical worlds—all set against a backdrop of neon, denim, and California cool.

Churchill's Pub, 2013

Published: January 5, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/churchills-pub-2013)
Summary: A brief visit to Churchill’s Pub in 2013 evokes memories of its gritty charm and chaotic energy. The post reflects on its iconic decor, a loud band, and the venue’s enduring vibe—likened to the Titanic sunk on dry land—captured during a marketing stop and a fleeting moment in Miami nightlife.

SAE Miami, 2011

Published: January 3, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/sae-miami-2011)

Summary: A humorous and humbling memory from a 2011 recording session at SAE Miami, where a broken guitar string nearly derailed the evening. Thanks to a quick-thinking engineer and a generous lobby guitarist, the session was saved. The post captures the camaraderie, improvisation, and occasional chaos of making music with friends.

Zayre Store, Miami, in the 80s

Published: January 2, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/zayre-store-miami-in-the-80s)
Summary: A nostalgic snapshot of weekend bus rides from Little Havana to Zayre on NW 7th St in 1980s Miami. The post recalls joyful shopping with grandmother Ramona, toy aisle treasures, and walking out with bags of fish. It paints a vivid picture of mall life, Cuban cafeterias, and the charm of a bygone retail era.

Jimbo's, Key Biscayne, Miami, Florida

Published: January 1, 2024
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/jimbos-key-biscayne-miami-florida)
Summary: A wild and dusty 2011 performance at Jimbo’s in Key Biscayne, Miami, unfolds like a scene from a surreal rock opera. The post captures the eccentric charm of the venue—once a filming location for *Flipper*—and the unpredictable cast of characters who danced, improvised, and drifted through a day of music, heat, and unforgettable moments.

The drummer went berserk!

Published: December 31, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-drummer-went-berserk)
Summary: A fiery musical evening at Titanic Brewery in Coral Gables, 2011, kicks off with a Beatles vs. Stones debate that sends a fellow drummer into a frenzy. The post captures the tension, the setup of camcorders for the performance, and a spontaneous harmonica-led improvisation that added a twist to the night’s set.

Lliraldi dominated the studio, though blind

Published: December 29, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/lliraldi-dominated-the-studio-though)
Summary: A heartfelt tribute to Félix Justo Lliraldi Michelena (1945–2001), a

blind yet masterful Cuban musician and sound engineer who inspired through talent and resilience. The post reflects on years of musical collaboration, personal loss, and the emotional journey of reconnecting with memory and legacy in Little Havana.

Principe Alfonso Street, Havana, Cuba, 1899

Published: December 29, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/principe-alfonso-street-havana-cuba)
Summary: A richly detailed exploration of family history centered on Príncipe Alfonso Street in 1899 Havana, where Moisés Escagedo Mier ran a clothing store at No. 441. The post traces the Escagedo lineage from Piélagos, Spain to Cuba, highlighting Moisés's passport record, his brother Diego Millan Escagedo Mier's estimated birth, and the migration patterns of their descendants. It's a vivid portrait of 19th-century heritage, commerce, and identity.

The ol' Garage of Sweetwater, Florida

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-ol-garage-of-sweetwater-florida)
Summary: A nostalgic look at Sweetwater's neighborhood garage, once run by Pereda and formerly Uncle Miltie's Gas Station in the '60s—complete with a Hammond organ for waiting customers. The post traces the site's evolution from trusted local repair shop to Jacob Tire Tech, with visual remnants of its past still visible. Nearby landmarks like El Caney and enduring apartment buildings anchor the memory in place and time.

Sweetwater Florida, 1923

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/sweetwater-florida-1923)
Summary: A vivid account of Sweetwater's quirky origins, beginning with 15 Pittsburgh families in 1923 who settled on elevated wooden homes after a flood. The post traces the town's evolution—from fruit tree farming and rough roads to circus performers, incorporation, bar fights, and even a goat arrest. By the 1970s, Sweetwater's identity shifted again with the arrival of Latin American immigrants, adding another layer to its colorful history.

The old Sweetwater Bridge

Published: December 28, 2023

Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-old-sweetwater-bridge)
Summary: A nostalgic reflection on Sweetwater’s old wooden bridge, once a one-lane passage and local diving spot in the 1980s. The post recalls pine-covered banks, canal mischief, and a treasured photo from the 1940s showing a woman fishing—capturing the timeless view between Sweetwater and the Tamiami Trail that shaped a childhood.

1960s, Crandon Park Zoo footage

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1960s-crandon-park-zoo-film)
Summary: A touching rediscovery of 1960s family footage filmed by Eloy Escagedo Lliraldi at Crandon Park Zoo and around Miami. Digitized decades later, the reels capture joyful moments of loved ones—many now gone—strolling, smiling, and living in a Miami that shaped the author’s world. The post is a tribute to memory, legacy, and the quiet power of film.

1960s, Little Havana, her first job

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/the-old-sweetwater-bridge)
Summary: A tender recollection of Berta Maria’s first job at Class Bargain Store in 1968–69 Little Havana, soon after arriving from Cuba at age 15. The post evokes the warmth of the Cuban exile community, familiar storefronts along West Flagler, and childhood memories of wandering the neighborhood, anchored by family, sandwiches, and the quiet magic of everyday life.

Christmas in Sweetwater, Florida, 1976 - 77

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack]
(https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/christmas-in-sweetwater-florida-1976)
Summary: A warm recollection of Christmas in Sweetwater, Florida, 1976–77, capturing the cozy charm of a Cuban-American household nestled among pine trees and quiet streets. The post details family traditions, home decor, and the evolving landscape of Sweetwater—once a sleepy town of 3,000, now transformed, but forever remembered as “a little home in the woods, with a splash of town.”

1962 Cuban Exile Joins The Army

Published: December 28, 2023
Link: [Read on Substack] (https://eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com/p/1962-cuban-exile-joins-the-army)
Summary: A gripping family account of Eloy J. Escagedo Lliraldi, a Cuban exile who enlisted in the U.S. Army during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The post traces his military service, involvement in covert anti-Castro operations, and a dramatic plot to invade Haiti and Cuba. Decades later, these stories—once whispered—resurface through declassified documents and personal memories, revealing a hidden chapter of South Florida’s exile history.

Compiled by Eloy Escagedo Gutierrez. This index preserves Cuban-American family history, Miami memoirs, and personal reflections originally published on Substack between 2023 and 2025. For more essays, visit eloyescagedogutierrez.substack.com.

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